Let me state for the record that I’ve been a .45 caliber devotee since I acquired my first Colt Model 1917 at the age of 15. However, for a confirmed .45 guy, I’ve owned, and still own, a lot of 9mm Parabellum handguns…a large assortment of P-38s and Lugers, an H&K P7 and VP70Z, a couple of Red 9 Mausers, several Browning P35s, a Polish Radom, a Glock 17, a Taurus PT92 and even an Astra 400 that fires 9mm Parabellums as readily as the 9mm Largos for which it is chambered. So, I’m not about to get into .45 ACP vs. 9mm Parabellum arguments…de gustibus non disputandum est, and all that.

The 9mm Parabellum, or 9x19mm, cartridge has been around for several years more than the .45 ACP. It was first adopted in the German Navy Luger of 1902. And for more than a century, it has been the round of choice in the handguns and submachine guns of armed forces all over the world. Even here in the U.S.A., traditionally .45 country, a 9mm Beretta is our current military issue sidearm. Fortunately, today’s defensive shooters are not limited to military ball ammo, but can choose from a wide range of excellent loads. The 9mm is a smart choice for those who want a concealable pistol with manageable recoil and excellent controllability…plus, there’s a limitless supply of cheap surplus practice ammo readily available.

One outstanding new arrival on the 9mm scene is the Hawg 9 from Para-Ordnance. The Hawg 9 is the latest iteration of Para’s successful lightweight-framed 3”-barreled single-action Warthog series, except this one packs 12+1 rounds of 9mm, not 10+1 of .45 ACP, and it weighs 25 oz. with an empty magazine, four oz. more than its .45 counterpart. At 6.5” long and 4.5” high, the Hawg 9 falls just within the definition of a pocket pistol…although the pocket would probably have to belong to cargo pants or a field jacket. The Hawg 9 has some interesting extras as standard equipment. It comes with a skeletonized competition hammer for faster lock time, and a skeletonized trigger with an overtravel adjustment (a note included in the box cautions the user that this adjustment has been pre-set at the factory, and it’s best not to mess with it). Like all Para pistols, the Hawg 9 features a ramped barrel, which means it will reliably feed virtually any bullet configuration.

And like all recent Para pistols, the Power Extractor feature is included. The oversized extractor claw is 50 percent larger than a conventional 1911-type extractor, and will haul even crudely or swollen cases out of the chamber without fail. I tried some grungy 1940s-vintage military surplus and modern imported lacquered steel-cased ammo, and it worked quite well, with no feeding...continued on Page 42